



JACK DOYLE

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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DOYLE CLARIFIES TOBACCO REVENUE SPENDING GUIDELINES

*Democrat Caucus' Hearing Would Discuss
Spending Plan that is Already Law*

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle today clarified issues related to the allocation of funds from Monroe County's securitization of tobacco revenues. The clarification comes in the wake of an announced public forum on this issue, being sponsored by the Democrat Caucus of the County Legislature.

"Many groups from throughout the community are under the mistaken impression that the upcoming forum will have an impact on the allocation of tobacco revenues," said Doyle. "Unfortunately, the Democrats in the Legislature did not mention the fact that the use of these dollars is specifically dictated by federal regulating authorities -- including the Internal Revenue Service. Beyond the very specific federal guidelines, the Legislature itself passed a local law last year which set additional, specific parameters."

The Monroe County Legislature passed a local law on April 11, 2000 designating how Monroe County would spend tobacco securitization proceeds. In fact, the local law, as passed, had been amended by the Legislature with specific spending constraints not included in the county administration's initial draft.

The local law specified that \$83 million in securitization revenue be spent on debt reduction, \$2 million be used for open space preservation and the remaining \$52 million be used to avoid debt (bonding) on upcoming capital projects. It also required that these capital projects come before the Legislature for approval.

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The federal and local guidelines on the securitized tobacco revenues do not allow for the use of these dollars to fund any social programs or initiatives. The county's remaining revenue from the securitization can only be used to avoid the issuance of public debt on upcoming capital projects that would otherwise be bonded.

Once these projects are identified and brought before the Monroe County Legislature for approval, members of the public and other interested groups and organizations will have the opportunity to discuss these projects during the official public forum period of the Legislature.

Given the federal and local laws pertaining to this issue, the Democrat Caucus' scheduled forum will have no official bearing on how tobacco revenues are allocated. The primary decision making actions on this issue occurred in April 2000 and subsequent discussion will occur before the full Monroe County Legislature as directed by local law.

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